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The Megaliths of Northern Europe

Magdalena Midgley

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The North European megaliths are among the most enduring structures built in prehistory; they are imbued with symbolic meanings which embody physical and conceptual ideas about the nature of the world inhabited by the first Northern farmers. *The Megaliths of Northern Europe* provides a much needed up-to-date synthesis of the material available on these monuments, incorporating the results of recent research in Holland, Germany, Denmark and Sweden. This research has brought to light new data on the construction of the megaliths and their role in the cultural landscape, and Magdalena Midgley offers a fascinating interpretation of the symbolism of megalithic tombs within the context of early farming communities. This wealth of new evidence suggests the Northern European megaliths were important foci in the wider north-west European context.

The construction of dolmens and passage graves, using huge glacial boulders, demanded both great communal effort and considerable skill. In addition to this technical expertise the master builders also made use of their esoteric knowledge of rituals. This was expressed in the use of exotic building materials and special architectural features, and in the placement of tombs within the natural and cultural landscapes, creating new metaphors and images.

Fully illustrated, this book will be of interest to both undergraduate and postgraduate students of European Prehistory, Archaeology and Prehistoric Anthropology, as well as architects who study ancient architecture and social anthropologists who study modern megaliths.

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